

The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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President's Corner by Maureen F. Harvey

As I'm struggling to think of a topic for this issue, I'm worried about the future of MOS. Who will step forward to volunteer to be our next Vice President? Next Secretary? I am usually an optimistic person but feel weighed down right now by the uncertainty of filling these important roles. The slate of officers needs to be nailed down by the submission deadline for the next issue of the Yellowthroat (March 25), in order to be published prior to the MOS Conference. Voting on the slate occurs at the annual membership meeting at the Conference. Your Nominations Committee Chair Helen Patton (301-588-5418, helen@dataprompt.com) would be glad to hear thoughtful suggestions and especially glad to hear from willing qualified volunteers.

We also continue to have vacant committee slots that need some thoughtful help from the membership. Who will be our next Conference Chair? Our outgoing Chair Janet Shields is arranging the facilities and meals for the 2015 event but needs her replacement to step up soon to make the 2015 Conference a success. The Conference Committee changes membership somewhat depending on location because chapters local to the venue get involved in helping out, but several experienced folks volunteer year after year. The new Chair will be well-supported and mentored.

I am happy to report that I have had some good suggestions regarding setting up a Facebook presence for MOS, which I will be pursuing after this article is submitted for publication. Another item I will have finished by the time this issue is published is MOS's application to participate in the 2014 Maryland Charity Campaign (due February 21). An updated MOS brochure is also under construction. Some of these things might be better accomplished by the unfilled Committee Chairs—Communications, Development, and EarthShare (workplace giving campaigns) come to mind. The Executive Officers step in to do what they can, but it would be far better to have a few devoted volunteers so things don't slip by (e.g., the MOS brochures were all gone, deadlines for applications were almost missed). Please contact me (410-795-3117, president@mdbirds.org) or any officer of MOS to volunteer or nominate someone.

What do I like the most about being MOS President? Aside from the joys of leading (!) this diverse organization, I enjoy the variety of challenges that arise, including the wonderful and sometimes weird questions and suggestions I receive from the public or members. We often have folks wondering why the MOS website

doesn't have links to personal birding or nature blogs or to businesses that provide hints on attracting birds. MOS's mission statement (<http://www.mdbirds.org/about/mission/mission.pdf>) informs our activities and actions. If the suggested link isn't clearly related to our mission, is there some other compelling reason to provide it? Does it relate to birds and bird habitats of Maryland? If it directly or indirectly supports a business that doesn't have a *quid pro quo* policy regarding recognizing and supporting MOS, it won't be on our website.

Many thanks to those who sent year-end donations to MOS. Donations were received for Irish Grove Sanctuary facility and habitat improvement and for unspecified support of MOS activities. It is heartening to have this kind of unexpected "praise" for MOS. It is a real pleasure to write thank you letters for donations. By the way, check out the separate article in this issue about a new Glass Egg Conservation Project. This is a donation incentive and opportunity to obtain some lovely fine art. See you out and about birding!

2014 MOS Conference

May 16 – 18

Holiday Inn Solomons Conference Center
Solomons, Calvert County, MD

The 2014 Conference is almost here but there's still time to register! Many things will be happening. Please join us.

Keynote Speakers: Our keynote speakers Bill Hubick and Jim Brighton will be talking about their biodiversity project but they will also be leading birding field trips with some biodiversity included. A birding field trip with either of these fine birders is always exciting. Their field trips will include some biodiversity discussions, which although not the main thrust, will add a new dimension to your experience.

Field Trips: Tyler Bell, jtylerbell@yahoo.com, is still looking for field trip leaders or area guides. Please contact him if you can help. He is arranging for Listers' Trips to Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties. He is also arranging night trips for both Friday and Saturday nights. Bob Ringer will be doing his always popular butterfly trip. Visit their many fine county parks. There will be field trips throughout the area. This is an area many of us neglect. Come down to Solomons for some fantastic birding.

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Poster Session: A popular event scheduled during our Saturday night Wine & Cheese with soda and beer also included. This is a time to relax and reconnect with old and new conference attendees. We hope to have posters from local college students and be able to talk with them about biodiversity.

Let's not forget the **Silent Auction and Raffle**. We are extremely lucky to have Barbara Johnson, Anne Arundel Chapter President, running this popular event. Bring your donations to Barbara on Friday at the conference. If you need to contact her, you may reach her at barbarajohnson222@gmail.com. Also, please consider volunteering to help Barbara (see note below). A couple of hours during Friday or Saturday would be a big help. Remember all the proceeds will be going to the Mattawoman Watershed Society.

A heartfelt thank you to Maryanne Dolan for putting together another wonderful workshop. Maryanne has persuaded Sean McCandless to give a Raptor ID Workshop. What an opportunity to hone your ID skills. While Sean is not giving a workshop-related trip, he is leading a trip. Take advantage of this and go out with one of our fine Maryland birders.

Remember – If you volunteer to help at the conference, you get to sign up for field trips in advance! Don't hesitate to contact me with questions. Hope to see you at our 2014 Conference!

Please join us in May.

Janet

Janet Shields, Conference Chair

410-901-1039

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MOS Conference Silent Auction Items and Helpers Sought

AABC President Barbara Johnson has volunteered to coordinate the fundraising silent auction at the MOS annual conference to be held on May 16-18, 2014, in Solomons, MD. She is seeking items or services from donors, including but not limited to books, equipment, art, etc.; or, services such as restaurant or retail gift certificates, local bird trip guiding, technical training, a cruise on your yacht, a stay in your mountain cabin, etc. Please call Barbara to arrange transport of items to the auction if you are not attending the conference. In addition, Barbara would be eternally grateful for help with preparation, setup, and conducting the auction. For questions or donations, contact Barbara at 410-703-4664 or barbarajohnson222@gmail.com.

The YMOS Birdathon: It's Not Too Late to Pledge!

Imagine a two-day, late winter birding quest to see at least 100 species on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Difficult? Try drawing up your list of 100 species in advance. Do you really expect to see every one of them? Now, give your quest some teeth by penalizing yourself for every species you miss on that list. Say, for every miss you need to see two off-list species. What species would make the final list? You might start with some "gimmies" like Canada Goose, but by the time your list is half done you will find yourself making increasingly difficult choices -- to put a "gimme" on it, or to save up a bunch of them off-list as insurance against the inevitable misses. Based on your list, what would be your birding strategy over your two days in the field?

These are the design and ground rules of the YMOS Birdathon to take place this year on the 15th and 16th of March. It is this fund raiser that enables young birders to represent the MOS at the World Series of Birding (WSB) competition this May in Cape May, NJ. The kids themselves construct their 100-species "Must-See List," make all species identifications in the field, and, yes, they are penalized two species points for each miss. They also develop a birding strategy for each day. Day 2 can get very exciting: "Let's go after that stupid Must-See," vs. "At 16 points in the hole there's no way we'll see eight Must-See's by sunset. Let's make up some ground!" In 2011, fog on Day 1 shut down the coast (how do you miss Sanderling at Ocean City?); the kids worked hard for 105 total species, but eight Must-See misses dropped their total species points to only 97. Last year, good weather prevailed and their net species total was 123 after correcting for only three Must-See misses. This is not your typical Birdathon at all!

You can support the YMOS by pledging \$0.25, \$0.50, or \$1.00 per species seen in the Birdathon. We do invite persons to double their pledge amount for each species seen above 100. In 2013 the MOS fledged four WSB youth teams. Two, the YMOS Marsh Giggles (Elementary) and the YMOS Zombirders (one our two Middle School teams), won their respective divisions. In fact, the 162 species recorded by the Zombirders was a YMOS record! This kind of showing would not have been possible without the \$2,000 raised through the YMOS Birdathon. This year we anticipate up to four teams again, two each at the Middle and High School levels. Whether or not we can put 16 deserving young birders into the field depends in no small part on you. Pledge email your pledges to George Radcliffe or Wayne Bell. Those who pledge in advance of the Birdathon will receive a copy of the Must-See list as soon as it is ready. Everyone who pledges will be sent the results shortly after the Birdathon with information on what you owe and where to send your check.

On behalf of the MOS, some incredibly supportive parents, and a group of amazing young birders, thank you for your attention.

George Radcliffe, MOS Youth Programs

radclifg@gmail.com; 410.228.7670

Wayne Bell, MOS WSB Committee

wbell2@washcoll.edu; 410.820.6002



ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Workshop Series

Kevin Smith writes: The Anne Arundel Bird Club is proud to present our workshop series for the 2013-2014 birding season. The workshops will be led by experienced members of the AABC and will include topics that we feel will enhance our membership's enjoyment of bird watching. The workshops are designed to offer a more in-depth and personalized approach to educating birders in various topics that are not available through our monthly meetings or field trips. Each workshop will be held at a convenient location in Anne Arundel County and contain an audio-visual presentation. In 2013, we held workshops for bird photography, artistic journaling, and using smart phone apps for birding. Each of these workshops was well-attended and received great reviews from the attendees. In 2014, we are scheduling workshops with topics that include "tree identification", "bird-friendly backyard habitat" and "bird identification" for difficult species like sparrows and raptors. Please check our website (www.aabirdclub.org) or Facebook group (Anne Arundel Bird Club) for details and dates.

One example of these workshops will be a discussion by Tom Stephenson, co-author of *The Warbler Guide: The Overlooked ID Points that Make Identifying Warblers Easy*. Our warblers are some of the most beautiful birds of the world, but their colors often blind birders to many of their most important ID points. This problem is compounded by the often brief and obstructed views we have in the field. Tom's talk will discuss many of the very subtle very important but often overlooked ID points, such as overall contrast, subtle facial features, color impressions, feather edging, rump contrast, and foraging style, location, and behavior. Following the discussion, books will be for sale. Tom will sign books and chat, so bring your Warbler ID questions and photos! This presentation will be at Jug Bay on Saturday, March 8, 10 a.m. to noon.

Pat Tate reports: "Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson, Arizona always lives up to its name. Having visited there many times in the spring and fall, this was the first time Juanita and I visited it in the winter. It did not disappoint. We made 4 trips there between Christmas and the 3rd of January and had 46 species to show for our efforts. Northern Shoveler and Ruddy Ducks were most numerous, but American Wigeon, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal and Bufflehead were present in small numbers. We heard many Sora rails, but most were hidden in the wetlands. We did however spot three of them and had an extended and very clear view of one. Woodpeckers, including

Gila, Ladder-backed, Red-naped Sapsucker and Northern Flicker (red-shafted) were well represented. Verdin, Cactus Wrens, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets darted about along with the Yellow-rumped, Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers. Abert's Towhee, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow and Lincoln's Sparrow were also active and relatively easy to see and appreciate. The Phainopepla, Pyrrhuloxia and Northern Cardinal were there in small numbers. A Spotted Sandpiper, several Least Sandpiper, a Black Phoebe, an immature Vermillion Flycatcher, and Gambel's Quail greeted us at the entrance. We had fly-overs of Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel and Cooper's Hawk. A side trip to Ski Valley at Mt Lemmon produced a Rock Wren and Mountain Chickadee, while a trip to the San Xavier del Bac Mission was successful for a Greater Roadrunner.

All in all it was a pleasant change from the birds of the east and a welcome break from the cold weather."

Colin Rees writes about birding in Belize: "Despite its small geographical area, Belize has a vast array of ecotypes and its flora and fauna are highly diverse comprising 3,408 species of plants and more than 150 species of mammals, 574 birds, 151 amphibians and reptiles, and nearly 600 freshwater and marine fishes. In consequence, the country has designated 94 protected areas covering 34.9% of the country's land area and marine protected areas representing 10.6% of the country's territorial waters.

"The Belize Barrier Reef is the second longest in the world with more than 100 coral species and 500 species of fish. With cloud and broadleaf forest, pine woodland, savannah, marshes and lagoons and mangrove and littoral forests, it is not surprising that Belize has such an extensive avifauna. A little more than half do not reach northern climes and are thus truly tropical.

"My time was limited but I did see Magnificent Frigates joining Double-crested and Neotropic Cormorants and Brown Pelicans swooping, swerving and diving over the deep blue sea. Herons, gulls and terns dotted the shorelines and waders (familiar to Marylanders) played with the surf. It was an especial delight to see Ospreys again and their nests on some dwellings (in one case threatening the roof). Inland, drives along country roads revealed vultures (Turkey, Black and King), Roadside Hawks and American Falcons atop wires and poles and the ever-present Great Kiskadee named for its call. Great-tailed Grackles and Eastern Kingbirds were a common site in the towns and on forest edges. Red-throated Tanagers and Common Tody-flycatcher mixed with Red-eyed Vireos, and Black and White, Golden-winged and Palm Warblers; overhead Vaux's Swifts graced the cloudless sky.

"There is so much more to see and with some effort Scarlet Macaws may be observed west of the Maya Mountains along with the Keel-billed Motmot and Keel-billed Toucan and various hummingbirds, woodpeckers, tinamous and trogons.

"Although Belize has suffered less than its neighbors from such problems as soil erosion and water pollution, increasing population has produced substantial deforestation and a decline in water quality, the latter largely because of the seepage of sewage and industrial and agricultural chemicals into the water supply. Pollutants also threaten Belize's coral reefs and natural hazards include hurricanes and coastal flooding. Endangered species in

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Belize include the hawksbill, green sea, and leatherback turtles, the iguana, American crocodile, and Morelet's crocodile, five mammals, and the Harpy and Ornate Hawk Eagles, colonial seabirds, especially Roseate, Bridled and Sooty Terns. *Colin Rees*

HARFORD COUNTY

Josh Emm, who won Harford's Rookie Birder of the year in 2013, began birding in the fall of 2012. He rapidly became "hard core" as *Matt Hafner* stated. Josh is passionate almost obsessed with birds. He seems to pop up on all of Harford's trips and he's among the first to chase rarities. Josh writes--- it was no big surprise when he decided to do a "big year" for his first official year of birding.

My Harford Big Year

"Last year I completed my first ever Harford Big Year. It all started with Hurricane Sandy. I arrived at Lapidum boat launch early on October 30th (2012) with the hopes of seeing some rare seabirds. I saw Red Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Leach's Storm-Petrel, among other rare birds, but most importantly, I met *Matt Hafner*, who was instrumental in guiding and teaching me. I was hooked! By December 31st, I had decided that I wanted to see how many species I could identify, while staying close to home; I was going to do a Harford Big Year with a target goal of 230.

"Last year I started with a Harford Bird Club field trip to Perryman, where my first bird of the year was a Ring-billed Gull and the most memorable bird was my life Hermit Thrush, which I found myself. Over the next few months, I visited *Les Eastman's* Rufous Hummingbird (which I watched change from an immature male to an adult in full breeding plumage) and found a Common Redpoll at his feeders. I chased a White-winged Scoter on the Susquehanna (found by *John Hubbell*), and I also chased *Dennis Kirkwood's* Bullock's Oriole. As spring migration got into full swing, I was visiting Susquehanna State Park and Swan Harbor Farm Park almost daily. At Susquehanna, I learned my warblers, most of which were life birds. My best find though, a Red Phalarope, was at Swan Harbor Farm on May 9th. As spring became summer, the birding slowed and new year-birds became tough to find. I tidied up my breeders though, with Grasshopper Sparrow, Red-headed Woodpecker, Cliff Swallow, and Hooded Warbler to name a few. To this point I had 210 species.

"With fall migration came my opportunity to target the birds I had missed in the spring, such as Vesper Sparrow, Cape May Warbler, and Least Flycatcher. *Tim Carney* found a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Lakeside Ponds on Sept. 2nd and I found a Connecticut Warbler at Susquehanna State Park on Sept. 23rd. The most interesting part of fall migration was night flight at the Bel Air Parking Garage. In one night, over about 2 hours, *Matt Hafner* and I heard an estimated 2200 Swainson's Thrush calls, 2000 Veery calls, 1500 Rose-breasted Grosbeak calls, 1900 warbler calls, and 3 distinct Dickcissel. An amazing night that I will remember for the rest of my life! By the end of fall passerine migration, I was at 225 species, only 5 away from my goal, but I had no easy birds left.

"As luck would have it, December would be the magical rarity month I needed to get to my goal with 7 more species added to my year list; Great Cormorant, Snow Bunting, Rough-legged Hawk, Barnacle Goose, Lesser Black-backed Gull, and of course

Snowy Owl (found by *Mark Johnson*)! And similar to how my year began with a Ring-billed Gull, my year ended with an Iceland Gull, which was found by Matt. I ended the year with 232 species, 2 birds over my goal, and the second all-time best year for Harford County after the late *Rick Blom* with 255. All in all it was a great year and I now look forward to branching out more across the state." *Josh Emm*



Connecticut Warbler, photo by *Josh Emm*.

HOWARD COUNTY

In September, *Joe Hanfman* visited St. Paul Island, Alaska as part of the first American Birding Association Rarity hunting trip. Before arriving on the island there was a strong storm off eastern Asia which brought in rain, sleet, wind, snow, fog, mist, and more rain - just what you want when searching for rarities! "The days consisted of 12 hours of light, we even saw the sun a few times, while either walking many miles through the native celery plant known as Putchkie, or riding in a small bus to various locations around the island" Joe got six lifers including White-tailed Eagle, Pacific Swift, Gray-streaked Flycatcher, Eyebrowed Thrush, Brambling, and Common Rosefinch. A few of the other special birds included Emperor Goose, Arctic & Yellow-billed loons, Mottled Petrel, Gray-tailed Tattler, Common Snipe, Red-legged Kittiwake, and Sabine's Gull. In all, 100 species for the trip. Too bad it wasn't 101 because 1 1/2 weeks after the trip, the ABA's first ever Common Redstart showed up. *Anne Marie Raterman*

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Stephanie Lovell sent in a great promotion for the MDBirding Google Group: "When I was in Argentina, at Iguazu Falls, a beautiful small blue and green bird flew to a tree just as I was starting the walkway over the falls. When I looked at my pictures and tried to identify it, I couldn't find it in my Birds of Brazil book. So, right there in Brazil, I went to MDBirding and posted a picture of it. Within the hour I had three responses, the most complete coming from fellow club member *Gail MacKiernan*." The bird? A Blue-naped Chlorophonia.

In the "personal milestone" category, bird club member *Claire Nemes*, a 2013 graduate of the University of Maryland,

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writes “I have been accepted to the master’s program in biology at Ball State University in Indiana and will be studying the impacts of silvicultural practices on Cerulean Warblers with Dr. Kamal Islam beginning this Spring.” We wish her (and the warblers) all the best.

Gail MacKiernan, Barry Cooper and Sally Wechsler spent almost a month Down Under. “We started by flying into Sydney,



Blue-naped Chlorophia, photo by *Stephanie Lovell*.

which was at the time experiencing severe bush fires, the smoke from which clouded the air over the city. After spending one and a half days’ birding at Barren Grounds and Royal National Park, we boarded the cruise ship MS Oosterdam, bound for New Zealand. Some more birding in Melbourne and Hobart followed, before we settled in for sea-watching during the open ocean passage to the South Island of New Zealand. Good birds seen en-route included large numbers of the beautiful White-headed Petrel as well as many shearwaters and albatrosses. Rainy Milford Sound yielded Fiordland Crested Penguins while the stormy NZ west coast was alive with seabirds, including Gibson’s and Campbell’s Albatross. The group rented cars at all the New Zealand port stops, and managed to see quite a few endemic species including Yellow-eyed Penguin and passerines such as Tui, Rifleman, and Bellbird. However most of New Zealand’s endemic birds are in dire straits, over 60 species have become extinct since humans first arrived 800 years ago, including all the giant Moa. New Zealanders are trying hard to save what is left, and many species survive only on predator-free offshore islands or in fenced “mainland islands” such as Zealandia near Wellington. After disembarking from the cruise ship, our trio journeyed for 10 days on land, targeting endemic species and specifically the five species of kiwi. Of these, they saw four and heard the fifth. The most exciting was a Stewart Island Brown Kiwi only yards away on the same beach David Attenborough visited while filming ‘Life of Birds.’ We were lucky with weather, only two days of rain on this most rainy of islands, and saw most of the land bird targets including rarities such as Yellowhead and Kokako, unique shorebirds such as the Wrybill, and 32 species of “tubenoses” – petrels, shearwaters and albatross. New Zealand is a beautiful country (we expected to see a Hobbit emerge from the mossy forests at any time) but one

is more apt to see British birds such as Song Thrush or Blackbird than a native species, unless you really try hard!”

Chris Smith and Bob Mumford wrote that they followed in the footsteps of *Gail MacKiernan* and *Barry Cooper* --or at least some of them -- in visiting New Zealand in late November and December. “Chris and Bob spent most of their time on the South Island, but not before spotting a Saddleback and a Morepork on Tiritiri Matangi Island, and Wrybill at the Miranda Wetlands south of Auckland. The Wrybill is the only bird in the world whose bill bends to the side (always the right side). They rented a car in Christchurch and visited spots to see the Little Blue, Yellow-eyed, and Fiordland Crested Penguins. On Gail’s suggestion, they visited the Orokonui Sanctuary near Dunedin where an 8.7 kilometer predator proof fence has been erected. Native birds have been stocked there and are flourishing. Bob and Chris saw the colorful Kaka parrots there, as well as a pair of nesting Rifleman. Overall, the birds were great, the scenery spectacular and the people wonderful. Bob picked up 54 life birds and Chris, well, Chris doesn’t keep lists.”

Stephanie Lovell writes: “Hoping to combine a trip to the West coast for Thanksgiving and grey whales, I signed up for a twelve-day Road Scholar trip to Baja. Well, it was too early for whales, but there were three (bird) endemics that were there to be found. Nineteen birders of various capabilities started in San Diego. Before crossing into Mexico we stopped at the Tijuana River estuary where hundreds of Willet and Long-billed Curlew were flying about. Stops were frequent in various towns on our way down the peninsula to bird in the desert and the shore and sample the cuisine of Mexico. One of the best stops was an all-day trip to Espiritu Santo, a protected island off the coast of La Paz. On the way there we were treated to Blue-footed Booby and Magnificent Frigate bird nesting colonies. Hotels were luxurious or spartan, but all had at least one free margarita to start the dinner hour! Three endemics were found at the end of trip near Cabo San Lucas: a Gray Thrasher, the Belding’s Common Yellowthroat and Xantus’s Hummingbird. Other desert specialties that we found were Vizcaino Thrasher and Vizcaino Sparrow. A total of 191 species were sighted by the end of this fun trip.” *Chris Wright*

TRI-COUNTY

We were all excited this winter with the irruption of Snowy Owls. Tri-County member *Carrie Samis* is working with Project SNOWstorm. This research is technology-based, and in January a Maryland Snowy Owl was fitted with a solar-powered GPS-GSM transmitter along with one in Wisconsin and one in Pennsylvania. Our Maryland owl is called “Assateague” In February the Project SNOWstorm will have researchers in the field fitting up to 20 additional owls with transmitters. Anyone who wants to follow these birds can do so on the website www.projectSNOWstorm.org and Facebook page. Let’s root for “Assateague”. *Carol Broderick*



Birds of Note – by Les Roslund

Without a doubt, the irruption of SNOWY OWLS into our region this year has provided the greatest amount of birding joy and excitement in the winter reporting period. Large numbers of these birds have been reported up and down the eastern seaboard, even including some sightings in Florida. Maryland has certainly received its share, and DC has recently joined in the fun. The first MD report was from Worcester County where a ranger at Assateague Island National Seashore described a single SNOWY OWL on the sand dunes the morning of November 24th. Word was passed to Jim Stasz, and Jim informed the birding community. Subsequently, over the next two months, report after report of sightings poured in from throughout the state. Any Maryland birder who did not manage to view a SNOWY OWL in the state this winter just must have not been watching or responding to the reports.

One of the most readily viewed SNOWY OWLS was the one (or possibly two) that chose to roost near the east end of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, Queen Anne's County. This site included a small pond that offered a convenient supply of ducks for food. On December 15, Lori Byrne on Facebook provided the first report, and from then until Jan 18 the SNOWY OWL sightings from that site were reported with regularity. Best viewing was attained through scopes set up in the parking lot of Hemingway's Restaurant. Less fulfilling views were those from moving vehicles as they passed below the roosting birds.

The irruption also brought SNOWY OWLS to DC, with one of the best shows being given by a bird that chose to perch on a corner of the Washington Post Building at L and 15th Sts on Jan 24. Crowds of people, mostly non-birders, managed splendid views of this bird from quite close range. Tim Boucher and Wallace Kornack, amongst others, attained excellent photos of this bird.

There were so many SNOWY OWL reports during the past two months that it is unlikely that anyone will be able to precisely state the number of the birds that visited the MD/DC region. Surely the number would exceed a dozen, and it may even exceed two dozen. Many of the sightings were only reported locally, and some were not reported at all. It is hard to imagine a greater year than this for SNOWY OWL viewing in our area.

Far less numerous but still quite exciting were reports of TRUMPETER SWAN sightings in our region. The most reliable TRUMPETER was found by Mike Braun in a private community park near Arnold, Anne Arundel County, during the Annapolis Christmas Bird Count. Community members, when consulted, graciously granted access to the park for birders when they realized how special this bird was. This TRUMPETER is keeping company with a small flock of TUNDRA SWAN at a site where the birds are being fed (community of Ulmstead). Under such conditions it might stay around through much of the winter,

thereby providing great viewing for the birders who seek it out.

GOLDEN EAGLES also seem to have shown up in greater numbers than usual this winter. Three of them were reported by Dan Haas and Winger West in Lower Kent County during the Christmas Bird Count on Dec 15th. Other sightings included regular reports from Pickering Creek Audubon Center in Talbot County throughout the month of January, and even one from Black Walnut Point near Tilghman in Talbot County. GOLDEN EAGLE reports from the usual locations in Dorchester County remained at their normal levels.

On Dec 28th during the Ocean City Christmas Bird Count, Jen and Bob Elmer found a WESTERN Tanager along the entrance road to the Deer Run Golf Club near Berlin, Worcester County. The golf club representatives were friendly and gracious, but the bird was not easy to re-locate. Eventually Ron and Carole Gutberlet of Salisbury re-found the bird and attained some excellent confirmation photos. Other birders soon arrived to enjoy this bird and it was periodically seen until Jan 2nd.

Last year a juvenile BULLOCK'S ORIOLE spent much of the winter in the yard of Dennis Kirkwood, Harford County. In mid-December of 2013 an adult male BULLOCK'S ORIOLE (probably the same one) was again coming to the Kirkwood yard. Right after Christmas the visitation hours were opened by the Kirkwoods, and birders are again finding the joy of viewing and photographing this beautiful casual vagrant species.

Dennis Kirkwood also provided the first report of the presence of two BARNACLE GEESE in Harford County. These birds were initially at Swan Harbor on Dec 19 but later moved around in that general region. They were relocated twice and were last seen by Matt Hafner on Dec 29th.

In addition to the SNOWY OWLS mentioned above, this has also been a quite good winter for finding SHORT-EARED OWLS. They have returned reliably to most of the traditional locations, but one new location for them has emerged and is worthy of comment. In far eastern Talbot County beside Kate's Point Road up to six of them were seen hunting over a large field of tall grass where they had not been noticed in recent years. The first report came from Paul Spitzer who resides in the area. Paul saw three of them on Jan 1, and also had seen some in late December. Since then, they have been regularly found at the site. It was Tucker Dalton of Talbot County and a birding friend from out-of-state who managed to view six in the region at one time.

MD/DCRC Sharpens Skills at the Smithsonian by Studying Skins

By Bill Hubick

Chair, MD/DC Records Committee

Each year, the MD/DCRC spends a day at the Smithsonian Institution studying bird specimens. We generally focus on challenging taxa that we expect to review, whether because they are currently represented in the review queue or because we can't resist wishful thinking about future state records. With 2013 being such an exceptional year for Eurasian shorebirds, the Committee agreed to a theme of vagrant shorebird identification. We carefully compared and contrasted juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and juvenile Pectoral Sandpipers, Wood Sandpiper and Solitary Sandpiper, Common Ringed Plover and Semipalmated Sandpiper, four godwit species, Eurasian Woodcock and American Woodcock, and finally, Spotted Towhees and possible hybrids.

Following each year's workshop, committee members volunteer to document findings for posterity. We hope these will be useful to future committee members and to others in the extended community. The full workshop report, with many specimen photos can be found at <http://www.mdbirds.org/mdderc/pdf/rcskins2013.pdf>. This is an abridged account comparing juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpiper vs. juvenile Pectoral Sandpiper.

Background

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper is a rare but regular vagrant to the East Coast. The species was voted #7 in "Maryland's Next 10 Bird Species", written by Matt Hafner and me (http://www.billhubick.com/docs/Marylands_Next_Ten.pdf) in July 2009. This was by far the highest ranked shorebird species by Maryland birders, followed distantly by Bar-tailed Godwit (#20), Pacific Golden-Plover (#24), Black-tailed Godwit (#25), and Snowy Plover (#28). We summarized as follows, "Sharp-tailed Sandpiper received nearly three times the votes of the next most popular shorebird, Bar-tailed Godwit. There are two accepted records each for Delaware and New Jersey, as well as four records for Virginia. As noted by Marshall Iliff in 2001, a record from the Hunting Creek mudflats, Fairfax, Virginia (14-23 Sep 1983) probably flew over Maryland waters of the Potomac River. As summarized by Iliff, most of the 15+ records from the East Coast have been juveniles concentrated between mid-September and mid-October. Other records from May to August show that this species should be considered at all times during migration. Delaware's two records were adults found at Bombay Hook on 8 Aug 1993 and 5-6 August 2002."

We focused our efforts on reviewing juvenile Sharp-tailed and Pectoral Sandpipers collected in September.

Findings

I always like to start by looking at the full trays of specimens to note any obvious differences in overall impression. The differences were striking, with Pectorals showing heavily streaked breasts with fine demarcations, and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers showing a warm, buffy suffusion of color that faded much more gradually into the belly. Overall plumage of the juvenile Pectoral Sandpipers was colder and less rufous than in the Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. We

also noted the obvious size differences between ages and sexes, which are well-known especially in Pectoral Sandpiper.

The buffy suffusion of color in Sharp-tailed Sandpiper never approached the dense, heavy streaking of Pectorals. Even in the more heavily marked juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, the streaks themselves were very thin. We also noted that the white throat on the juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpipers stood out much more noticeably and consistently than on the Pectoral Sandpipers.

Sharp-tailed Sandpipers are known for their rich chestnut crowns. Claudia Wilds was quoted as having said of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, "look for the shorebird with a Chipping Sparrow head." While certainly present in Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, our Pectoral Sandpiper specimens had chestnut crowns as well. In contrasting them, we agreed that Sharp-tailed crowns were a brighter chestnut color, but also that the blackish streaks were much thinner, which meant there was more of the chestnut color in the crown.

Finally, a comparison of bill size found Sharp-tailed Sandpiper bills to be much more delicate than on Pectoral Sandpipers.



Alternating juvenile Pectoral and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. Top and third birds are Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. Second and bottom are Pectoral Sandpipers. Photo by Bill Hubick.

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Alternating juvenile Pectoral and Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. From left to right: Sharp-tailed, Pectoral, Sharp-tailed, and Pectoral.
Photo by Bill Hubick.

Summary

Although Maryland lacks ideal access to its best shorebird hotspots, it is just a matter of time before a careful observer detects Maryland's first Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. It is easily among the most expected new shorebird species likely to be added to the state list. Under normal to good viewing conditions, identification should be straightforward using the field marks described here.

MOS ANNOUNCES THE GLASS EGG CONSERVATION PROJECT

By Maureen Harvey, MOS President

Photos by Aaron Kirchhoff

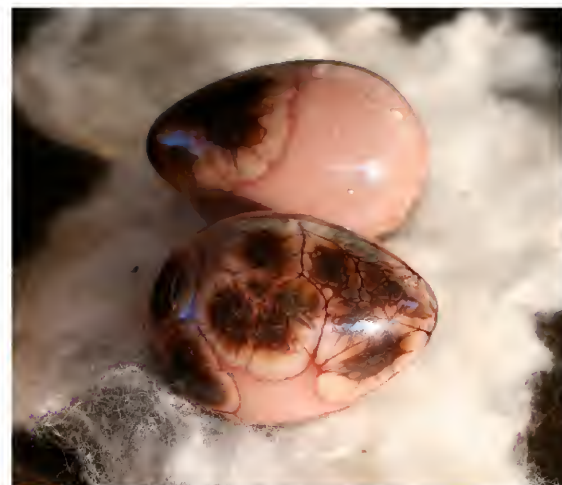
MOS is pleased to announce a partnership with glass artist and bird conservation advocate Aaron Kirchhoff (aaron.kirchhoff@gmail.com) of Rockville, Maryland. Mr. Kirchhoff has created several clutches of fine art glass eggs and offered them to MOS as incentives to raise funds in support of the conservation activities of the organization. The hand-made eggs are artistically rendered solid-glass replicas of threatened bird species. The Glass Egg Conservation Project was conceived in an effort to fulfill three goals: to assist the conservation efforts of MOS, to promote awareness of the need for ecological conservation, and to celebrate the immense variety and natural beauty of the bird egg. MOS will retain 100% of your tax-deductible donation, and the glass eggs are not available to be purchased from any other source. Just as in nature, no two of these eggs are exactly the same. "If you are interested in taking advantage of this incentive offer, submit a check for the minimum amount specified for the desired clutch to MOS Treasurer Dave Webb, 4141 Quail Way, Havre de Grace MD 21078. State which clutch is desired, and include your name, address, and phone number. Provide a delivery address if different from yours. For delivery as a gift, please provide your message to the recipient. Upon verification of the donation, the Treasurer will provide shipping information to the Artist."



Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) clutch contains three glass eggs for a \$200 donation.



California Thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*) clutch contains two glass eggs for a \$250 donation.



Majestic Longtailed Cackler (*Imperatorius longicauda*), a mythical avian creature representing the tragic decline of bird populations worldwide, speaks to our responsibility to reduce our impact and protect the ecology of the earth. A clutch contains two glass eggs for a \$300 donation.

Eight Scholarships Awarded to Hog Island Camp by: Kate Tufts, Scholarship Chair

MOS received eight applications this year for the National Audubon Society's Hog Island, Maine camps. After a thorough consideration of each application, the scholarship committee agreed to award scholarships to all eight applicants. Each person is so well qualified and the committee is confident that the knowledge each gains on Hog Island will be put to good use in furthering the public's awareness of birds and the natural world.

Two of our awardees come from Pickering Creek Audubon Center near Easton. Samantha Pitts is volunteer coordinator, teacher and naturalist while her colleague, Krysta Hougen, is camp director and teacher naturalist. Samantha will be studying Field Ornithology on Hog Island while Krysta will participate in the Sharing Nature: an Educators' Week. Lauren Greoski will also enroll in the Sharing Nature camp. Lauren is a park naturalist at Anita C. Leight Estuary Center in Harford County. Jennifer Elmer, an active member of the Tri-County Bird Club, is a nature guide at the Delmarva Discovery Center and a naturalist at Pocomoke River State Park. Jennifer will also take part in the Sharing Nature camp. Jacquelin Darrow is "helping to develop a program that employs eBird to introduce bird study to young people" in her capacity as graduate assistant at the Ward Museum of Waterfowl Art. Jacqueline has enrolled in the Joy of Birding workshop. Joining Jacqueline will be Elaine Friebele. Elaine is an education coordinator at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary. Two Howard County applicants include Molly Williams, an environmental educator at the James and Anne Robinson Nature Center, and Eileen Griffin, a second grade school teacher at Hollifield Station Elementary School. Both will participate in Sharing Nature: an Educator Week. Eileen echoed what all of the applicants indicated, "I am eager to learn and share with my students."

Congratulations to each and every one of them.

JUG BAY PRESENTATION – Saturday, March 8, 10:00 am-noon

A discussion by Tom Stephenson, co-author, *The Warbler Guide: The Overlooked ID Points that Make Identifying Warblers Easy*.

Our warblers are some of the most beautiful birds of the world, but their colors often blind birders to many of their most important ID points. This problem is compounded by the often brief and obstructed views we have in the field. Tom's talk discusses many of these very important but often overlooked ID points, such as overall contrast, subtle facial features, color impressions, feather edging, rump contrast, and foraging style, location, and behavior. Following the discussion, books will be for sale. Tom will sign books and chat, so bring your Warbler ID questions and photos!



**ENVIRONMENTAL
FILM FESTIVAL
IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL**

Environmental Film Festival to Present Films about Birds

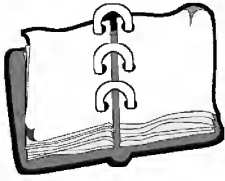
Founded in 1993, the EFF in the Nation's Capital is the film festival in the United States devoted to the entire spectrum of environmental topics. This is our 22nd year and during that time we have inspired, helped launch, and served as a model for many environmental film festivals across the country and around the world. The Festival's mission is to advance public understanding of the environment through the power of film. The 22nd annual Festival will present over 170 documentary, narrative, animated, archival, experimental and children's films, feature length and short, at over 70 venues across the D.C. area.

The Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital will present five films about the birds this March. Two films exploring the illegal poaching of birds: *Emptying the Skies*, based on a *New Yorker* article by Jonathan Franzen chronicling the rampant poaching of migratory songbirds in southern Europe, and *Field Report: Migratory Bird Trapping in South China* about the illegal taking of threatened and endangered Asian bird species, will screen on March 19 at E Street Cinema. Two films about individual species: *Magic of the Snowy Owl* (currently experiencing a historic irruption in our area!) and *Return Flight*, exploring efforts to restore the Bald Eagle to the Channel Islands of southern California will be shown on March 22 at the National Wildlife Visitor Center. *Parrot Confidential*, depicting the plight of pet parrots, will screen on March 25 at the Atlas Performing Arts Center. The Festival runs from March 18-30. For the complete Festival schedule, times and locations, visit www.dcenvironmentalfilmfest.org.

Contact: Helen Strong, helen@envirofilmfest.org or 202-342-2564

Peru Conservation Birdathon Update:

Due to scheduling concerns, the Conservation Birding trip to Perú with the Amazon Conservation Association will be postponed until further notice. The organizers hope to run this trip in 2015. Stay tuned for further announcements, as this trip will hopefully run in the future. If you have further questions, contact Ross Geredien at goodmigrations@yahoo.com



MOS Calendar

March - April 2014

By Andy Martin

Saturday, March 1

■ Anne Arundel. Fran Uhler Natural Area. Located along the Patuxent River between Bowie State and the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, the Fran Uhler NA features five miles of woodland trails open for hiking, bicycling, and nature study. We'll meet at Parole P&R at 6:45 AM. Contact Kevin Smith (ravens3077@yahoo.com) for details. Leader: Bill Sefton.

■ Frederick. Woodcock Excursion. Location TBD. Contact leader, David Smith at 410-549-7082 for meeting location and time.

■ Howard. Winter Sparrow Search. Explore wetlands and dry fields in this intensive search for as many sparrows as possible. Previous years have turned up non-sparrow rarities! Limit: 12. Expect difficult walking for most of the day. Knee boots a must. Facilities at some spots. Contact Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net or 443-285-3302 to sign up and get meet time.

■ Kent. Blackwater NWR, Dorchester County. Prime waterfowl and eagle country; pelicans and other surprises. Full day, bring lunch. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot (off Philosopher's Terr) in Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

BOARD MEETING. **MOS.** 10 AM. Hosted by the Talbot and Caroline Bird Clubs at The Wye Research Education Center (124 Wye Narrows Dr, Queenstown). Contact Janet Shields, MOS Secretary at janetbill@prodigy.net for add'l info.

✈ YMOS. Deadline to commit to MD youth World Series of Birding team. Contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com if interested. Needed: Middle and High School students loving birds and nature. Experience not needed.

■ Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Saturday and Sunday, March 1 and 2

■ Patuxent. Eastern Shore Coastal Spots. All-day trip Saturday with an optional overnight stay for birding in the Ocean City area. Meet at 7:30 AM at the Bowie P&R to carpool. Contact the leaders: Marcia Watson, mww@udel.edu or Dave Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Sunday, March 2

■ Anne Arundel. Family Bird Walk, Kinder Farm Park. This trip is designed for beginners and families to discover the joy of bird watching. Experienced leaders will facilitate these

walks through various habitats and introduce you to the basics of spotting and identifying birds. Bring binoculars if you have them, but they are not required. We will be using our ears as much as our eyes! We'll meet in the parking area next to the Visitor Center at 8 AM. Leader: Stacy Epperson, 410-987-7533 or stac.epperson@gmail.com.

■ Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM, West end of the parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl and lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader: Allen Lewis, allenlewis@gmail.com.

■ Talbot. Terrapin Park and Cross Island Trail. Contact leader, Danny Poet at 410-827-8651 for all trip details including meet place and time.

Tuesday, March 4

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Speaker and topic: TBA. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Info: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

■ Montgomery. Informal Late Afternoon Walk Until Dusk. Joint MBC/ANS trip. Meet at the end of Seneca Rd at Riley's Lock "on the bridge" at 5 PM. After checking out the river we will proceed to Hughes Hollow. Highlights here will include waterfowl flying into roost. We will try for displaying woodcock if they are in the vicinity. Bring scope, flashlight, and wear "muddy conditions" footwear. Reservations not required. For more info call Jim Green at 301-742-0036 (m) or jkgbirdman53@gmail.com.

Wednesday, March 5

■ Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "Geocaching" by Alan and Penny McQuarrie. 7:30 PM at the South Carroll Senior Center, 5928 Mineral Hill Rd, Eldersburg. Contact Dave Harvey at 410-795-3117 for more info.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Speaker and Topic: TBA. Location: Elkton HS, Rm B120, 110 James St, Elkton. Directions: From I-95 take the Elkton exit and go south on MD 279 (Elkton Rd) for about 2.5 miles. Turn right on James St. The high school is at the end of James St. Meeting starts at 7 PM. For more info, contact Sean "Bird Dog" McCandless at seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, March 6

MEETING AND ANNUAL FUNDRAISER. **Anne Arundel.** Annual Heise Lecture, 8 PM at Quiet Waters Park, Blue Heron Rm. Subject and Speaker: "Birds and Wildlife of the Peruvian Rainforest and the Threats They Face" by Enrique G. Ortiz, VP and Co-

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Founder, Amazon Conservation Association. More info: Barbara Johnson, 410-703-4664 or barbarajohnson222@gmail.com.

MEETING. Frederick. Speaker: *Andy Martin*. Program: "Listening to and Recording Night Flight Calls - What's It All About?" 7 PM at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info, contact Tom Humphrey, Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org or 301-696-8540.

Harford. Timberdoodle Search. Evening watch for one of our most interesting (and elusive!) birds, the American Woodcock, as it performs its mating dance. Meet 6:15 PM at the Sweet Air section of Gunpowder SP. Take Greene Rd, either SW from Rte 165 or NE from Rte 145 to Moores Rd, then SW on Dalton-Bevard Rd into the park. Leaders: Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978 or mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil and Joyce Browning, 443-966-0249 or jbrowni3@umd.edu.

Montgomery. Informal Late Afternoon Walk Until Dusk. See Mar 4 listing. For more info call Jim Green at 301-742-0036 (m) or jkgbirdman53@gmail.com.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-459-3375 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, March 8

Allegany/Garrett. Rocky Gap SP, Mason Road Pond, and the C&O Canal Terminus Area for waterfowl. Leaders: Ray Kiddy and Mary Huebner. Meet 9 AM at Western MD Train Station parking lot. Contact Ray (rrkiddy@atlanticbb.net) or Mary (marybrd22@gmail.com) for more info.

Baltimore. Middle Creek WMA. All-day trip (bring lunch) to visit this major gathering place north of Lancaster, PA for Snow Geese and other waterfowl. There is also an excellent display of mounted birds at the Visitor Center. Note: Trip may go elsewhere if Middle Creek is frozen over. Meet 8 AM at Timonium P&R on Greenspring Dr/Deereco Rd off Timonium Rd just east of I-83. Leader: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com. Contact leader to learn if trip is on or off, due to ice on lake or weather conditions.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH. Cecil. Cabin Fever. This family-friendly community outreach event will take place between 11 AM and 2 PM. We'll have supplies for children to make peanut butter and pine cone bird feeders. Location: Moore's Chapel United Methodist Church, 392 Blake Rd, Elkton. For more info, contact Pat Valdata, pvaldata1@gmail.com.

Howard. Waterfowl Search. Meet at Broken Land Pkwy/Rte 32 P&R (West side) at 8 AM. We'll carpool to search the Howard Co waterways for ducks, grebes, mergansers, and loons. Chance of an early migrant. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643 or krschwa1@verizon.net.

Montgomery. Patuxent River Park, Jug Bay NA, PG Co. Half day. Joint trip with ANS. Waterfowl, Wilson's Snipe, winter and early spring songbirds, Ospreys displaying. Meet 8 AM at parking lot by park hdqtrs. Wear "muddy conditions" footwear. Reservations required. Limit: 15. Call the leader: John Bjerke at 240-401-1643.

Sunday, March 9

(Remember Daylight-Saving Time starts!)

Anne Arundel. Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center and Kent Narrows. Formerly known as the Horsehead Wetlands Center, CBEC has grown to a 510-acre preserve under conservation easement. This is an excellent location to observe waterfowl and the most consistent place to find Brown-headed Nuthatches. We'll meet at Bay 50 Shopping Center at 7 AM. Contact Kevin Smith (ravens3077@yahoo.com) for details. Leader: TBD.

Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for winter waterfowl, raptors, passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 9 AM at the nature center. Leaders: Bob Rineer, 410-252-6408 or brineer@verizon.net, and Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

Harford. Swan Harbor Farm Park. This Harford Co gem with three impoundments, a commanding view of the Bay, wooded trails, and open fields has developed into a fine location for a broad spectrum of bird life, including waterfowl, marsh specialties, raptors, and sparrows. Meet at 8 AM at the parking lot adjacent to the Agricultural Education Center (near end of driveway). Leaders are Josh Emm, 410-937-6790 or apistopanchax@gmail.com and Tom Gibson, 410-734-4135 or gibsonlld@aol.com.

Howard. Centennial Park. See Mar 2 listing. Centennial Park. Leaders: Richard and Renee Peters, Richard@rrrpeters.org.

Talbot. Akridge Property. Target species will be wintering ducks, sparrows, and other birds of brush and fields. Depart Easton Acme parking lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM. Leaders: Paul and Priscilla Thut, 410-745-6657 and Les Coble, 410-829-5501.

Tuesday, March 11

MEETING. Allegany/Garrett. Speakers: *Bill and Debbie (Wiles) Devlin, Jolene Scofield, and Mary Huebner*. Topic: "Birding in the Galapagos Islands and the Ecuador Mainland." 7 PM at Compton Hall, Rm 224, Frostburg State U. For add'l info contact Mary Huebner at marybrd22@gmail.com.

MEETING. Kent. Speaker: *Ron Guterlet*. Program: "Alaska - Gambell, Nome, and Homer." 7:30 PM at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

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Montgomery. Informal Late Afternoon Walk Until Dusk. See Mar 4 listing. For more info call Jim Green at 301-742-0036 (m) or jkgbirdman53@gmail.com.

MEETING. Patuxent. "Hog Island Audubon Camp and Seabird Conservation," by *Chris Garrett and Lisa Bierer-Garrett*. 7:30 PM at the College Park Airport Annex, College Park, MD. For add'l info call David Mozurkewich at 301-459-3375 or go to <http://www.pgaudubon.org/programs.html>.

Thursday, March 13

Harford. Timberdoodle Search. Evening watch for one of our most interesting (and elusive!) birds, the American Woodcock, as it performs its mating dance. Meet 7:15 PM at the at the Sweet Air section of Gunpowder SP. Take Greene Rd, either SW from Rte 165 or NE from Rte 145 to Moores Rd, then SW on Dalton-Bevard Rd into the park. Leaders: Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978 or mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil and Joyce Browning, 443-966-0249 or jbrowni3@umd.edu.

MEETING. Howard. "Coming Home: Understanding the Causes and Consequences of Dispersal in a Migratory Bird, the American Redstart," by *Clark Rushing*. This research uses scientific advances for studying birds as they return to their breeding grounds. Hospitality 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Wes Earp, 410-531-3197.

MEETING. Talbot. Speaker and subject TBA. 7 PM at Wm. Hill Auditorium, 501 Dutchman's Ln, Easton. For more info, contact Terry Allen at pattyallen10@hotmail.com or 410-829-5840.

Saturday, March 15

Baltimore. Blackwater NWR. All-day trip to see large numbers of waterfowl during the height of spring staging season. Bald Eagles are a bonus feature. Ospreys and Pine Warblers may be newly arrived. Early shorebirds possible. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Bring lunch. Meet 7:30 AM at Nursery Rd P&R. Leader: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com. Ice/snow date: Mar 22.

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Erin Lineberry, 410-530-0083.

Frederick. Middle Creek WMA (north of Lancaster, PA). All-day trip. Looking for overwintering birds and early migrants. Leader: Pat Caro, 240-651-5651.

Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Washington. Fort Frederick. Meet at the Motor Vehicle

Administration (MVA) parking lot. Contact Linda Field at 301-797-6189 for start time and address of the MVA.

Saturday and Sunday, March 15 and 16

YMOs. MD Youth Birdathon. Ocean City to Western Shore. Remaining wintering birds, early migrants owls, and rails. Fund Raiser for the Youth World Series of Birding teams. The group will begin in Ocean City on Sat morning and end up in Dorchester Co by evening. The search will resume Sun morning in Dorchester Co and conclude in Cecil Co late afternoon. Lodging will be available at local homes Fri night in Ocean City and for Sat night in Dorchester Co. Students will need money for meals. Logistics and specific times will be coordinated once we know who is going. Participants can participate in either or both days. Level: medium to advanced. Contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com to reserve a spot.

Sunday, March 16

Anne Arundel. Blue Mash Nature Trail. Blue Mash is located in the buffer area surrounding the site of the former Oaks Landfill in Montgomery Co. This location features over grown fields surrounded by forest edges. We'll meet at Severna Park P&R at 7 AM. Contact Kevin Smith (ravens3077@yahoo.com) for details. Leader: TBD.

Baltimore. Irvine Nature Center. With forest, field, and marsh, this 116-acre site has an extensive trail system and is full of promise. Expect between 45 and 55 species with plenty of "little brown job" birds. Leader: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com. Meet 8:30 AM. Contact leader for location.

Howard. Centennial Park See Mar 2 listing. Centennial Park. Leader: Jeff Culler, cullerfuls@hotmail.com, 410-465-9006.

* **Talbot.** Rigby's Folly and Ferry Neck. Contact leaders for meet place and time. Leaders: Paul and Priscilla Thut, 410-745-6657.

Tri-County. Chincoteague NWR. Waterfowl, shorebirds, and early migrants. Bring lunch and drinks. Meet time 7:30 AM. Call the trip leaders for location. Leaders: Larry and Jean Fry, 410-208-4269.

Tuesday, March 18

Montgomery. Informal Late Afternoon Walk Until Dusk. See Mar 4 listing. For more info call Jim Green at 301-742-0036 (m) or jkgbirdman53@gmail.com.

Thursday, March 20

MEETING. Caroline. "Rain Gardens" presented by *Katelin Frase*, Senior Educator, Environmental Concerns. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton. For info contact Debby Bennett at dabennett1996@gmail.com.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at

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Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-459-3375 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Friday, March 21

ANNUAL SOCIAL. **Montgomery.** 6:30 PM at Woodend, Chevy Chase. Social hour followed by dinner and presentation to this year's Guest of Honor, Gail Mackiernan. The evening will conclude with the traditional members' slide show. See the back page of the *MBC Feb '14 Chat* at the MBC website (<http://montgomerybirdclub.org/>) for the signup form and info about submitting photos for the slide show.

Saturday, March 22

■ Anne Arundel. Greenbury Point. This is an excellent location to observe migrating shorebirds. We'll meet at Parole P&R at 7 AM. The trails at Greenbury Point are flat and grass covered. Scopes are encouraged. Contact Kevin Smith (ravens3077@yahoo.com) for details. Leader: Katherine Clark.

■ Cecil. Blackwater NWR and Beyond. A trip designed to see large numbers of waterfowl during the height of spring staging season. Bald Eagles are a bonus feature. Ospreys may be newly arrived and if so, will be setting up territories. Some early shorebirds might be on the move. Come take advantage of the peaceful Eastern Shore ambiance before the tourist season sets in. Bring breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Dress for possible extreme cold and wind. Bring scope if you have one. Meet at the parking lot of Blackwater Visitor Center at 7 AM for a full-day trip. Or to carpool, we suggest making arrangements to meet near Dunkin' Donuts in Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40/213 in Elkton, at 4 AM. Contact: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net for all trip details.

■ Harford. Harford Glen. Meet at the entrance gate of the Glen (west end of Wheel Rd) at 7 AM. Begin this tour with sightings from the parking lot, then proceed to survey the triple riparian habitats of Atkisson Reservoir, the faster flowing Winter's Run, and tributary Plumtree Run. Add the woodland trails and some open meadow to offer great opportunities for good birding. Co-leaders are Phil Powers, 410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@verizon.net and Dave Larkin, 410-569-8319 or larkin3001@comcast.net.

Sunday, March 23

■ Howard. Centennial Park See Mar 2 listing. Centennial Park. Leader: Mike Kerwin, m63kerwin@verizon.net, 410-461-2408.

■ Talbot. Oxford area. Contact leader for meet place and time. Leader: Tom Corl, 202-215-1684.

Monday, March 24

MEETING. **Tri-County.** Program: "Ecuador, the Amazon River Basin," by Sam Dyke and JoAnn Wilbur. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury. For more info contact Betty Pitney at 410-543-1853.

Tuesday, March 25

MEETING. **Washington.** Program TBA. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 for info. 7 PM at the Mount Aetna Nature Center.

Wednesday, March 26

Special Presentation. **Anne Arundel.** "The Amazing Wildlife of Madagascar and the Urgent Need for Conservation" by former State Senator *Gerald Winegrad*. 7 PM at the Blue Heron Room, Quiet Waters Park. Sponsored by Anne Arundel Bird Club and Friends of Quiet Waters Park. For add'l info contact Barbara Johnson at 410-7034664 or barbara.johnson222@gmail.com.

Saturday, March 29

■ Baltimore. Patterson Park. Early spring migrants found in this urban park may include Caspian Tern, Merlin, Pine Warbler, Fox Sparrow, or woodcock! Meet 8 AM at the White House in park near intersection of Lombard St and Patterson Park Ave. For questions or to borrow binoculars for the walk, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center at ppaudubon@gmail.com or 410-558-2473.

■ Frederick. Frederick County Waterfowl. Visit Frederick Co hotspots in search of lingering waterfowl, including Kershner's Pond. Leader: Mike Welch, 301-685-3561.

■ Harford. Eden Mill Nature Center. Survey the late winter/early spring bird life along this prime segment of Deer Creek. Meet co-leaders Susan Hood (susanhood@comcast.net or 410-937-7552) and Bob Werrlein (410-692-5180 or we2.rein@gmail.com) at 7 AM at the Eden Mill Nature Center at the pavilion parking lot on Eden Mill Rd.

■ Kent. Owl Prowl. Meet 7 PM at the Eastern Neck NWR Lodge. This field trip will hopefully bring us face to face with an owl or two after an introduction to local species and their calls. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

■ Washington. C&O Canal. Trip begins from the parking area below the Shepherdstown Bridge. Contact George Warrick at 301-799-9059 for start time and add'l details.

Sunday, March 30

■ Talbot. Cottingham. Contact leader for meet place and time. Leader: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002.

Tuesday, April 1

■ Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact leader: Ruth Culbertson, 410-825-1379 or ruthc@verizon.net.

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Tonight: "Birds of the Philippines" with Gail

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Mackiernan. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Info: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, April 2

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. Carroll. "Shorebird ID" by *Cindie Loeper and John Bjerke*. 7:30 PM at South Carroll Senior Center, 5928 Mineral Hill Rd, Eldersburg. Contact Dave Harvey, 410-795-3117 for more info.

MEETING. Cecil. Speaker and Topic: TBA. Location: Elkton HS, Rm B120, 110 James St, Elkton. Directions: From I-95 take the Elkton exit and go south on MD 279 (Elkton Rd) for about 2.5 miles. Turn right on James St. The high school is at the end of James St. Meeting starts at 7 PM. For more info, contact Sean "Bird Dog" McCandless at seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, April 3

MEETING. Frederick. Speaker: *Paul Baicich*. Program: "Amazing Breeding Biology of North American Birds" 7 PM at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info, contact Tom Humphrey, Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org or 301-696-8540.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-459-3375 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, April 5

Allegany/Garrett. Garrett County Ponds (Finzel Swamp, Piney Reservoir, Meadows Lake and Campground, and New Germany SP). Pack a lunch. Meet at Parkside School in LaVale at 9 AM. Contact: Mary Huebner, 301-777-0545 or marybrd22@gmail.com for more info.

Anne Arundel. Pocomoke River Paddle. Nick Nicholson (410-353-3329 or nickinchrist@netzero.net) will be taking folks on this ever-popular trip during spring migration. Prothonotary Warblers have been known to practically land on canoes. Bring your own canoe/kayak or rent one from the livery in Snow Hill. We'll meet at Bay 50 Shopping Center at 7 AM. Please contact Nick in advance to reserve a spot.

Frederick. Audrey Carroll Sanctuary. Looking for sparrows and early migrants. Contact the leader: Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660 for meet time and place.

Harford. Susquehanna SP. Meet at the Lapidum Landing boat launch area at 8 AM for a morning scan of the river for waterfowl and eagle flyovers. Other possibilities include Little

Gull and Black-headed Gull. Additional areas of the park to be visited will depend on conditions and recent sightings. The leader is Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905 or newarkfarms@gmail.com).

Howard. Alpha Ridge Landfill. Half day. Vesper sparrow and other field birds possible. Meadowlarks, kestrels, and other open country birds expected. Meet 7:45 AM at Alpha Ridge Park to carpool to landfill. Moderate walking over hills and fields of the landfill. Leader: Ralph Cullison, roci@rallison.org, 410-442-2181. Facilities available.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Saturday and Sunday, April 5 and 6

MOS. Irish Grove Sanctuary Work Weekend. The Irish grove spring workdays are scheduled for April 5 and 6. Please contact Brent Byers at baypuffin@hotmail.com for more info and to RSVP. User fees are waived for the workdays.

Sunday, April 6

Anne Arundel. Family Bird Walk, Kinder Farm Park. See Mar 2 description. Leader: Stacy Epperson, 410-987-7533 or stac.epperson@gmail.com.

Anne Arundel. Quiet Waters Park. We'll explore the wooded areas in the park and down along the river. Meet at Parole P&R at 7:30 AM. There is a \$6/vehicle fee to enter the park. Leader: Pat Tate, 410-266-6043 or jpt8@earthlink.net.

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Talbot. Urban Birding. This will be our 6th year birding around the Target Shopping Center and other nearby locations. Every year we have seen our FOY Rough-winged Swallow. We will scan fields, open water, tidal guts, wood margins, and hedgerows for early arriving migrants as well as wintering birds. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840 or pattyallen10@hotmail.com. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM.

Tuesday, April 8

MEETING. Allegany/Garrett. Speaker: *Mark Abdy*. Topic: "South African Birds." 7 PM at Compton Hall, Rm 224, Frostburg State U. For add'l info contact Mary Huebner at marybrd22@gmail.com.

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Check

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schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact leader: Chris Davidson, 410-828-1325.

MEETING. Kent. Speaker: *Kevin Omland*. Program: "Speciation in Ravens." 7:30 PM at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MEETING. Patuxent. "Cuba," by *Don Messersmith*. 7:30 PM at the College Park Airport Annex, College Park, MD. For add'l info call David Mozurkewich at 301-459-3375 or go to <http://www.pgaudubon.org/programs.html>.

Washington. Mills Park. First in a series of walks to promote birdwatching in local Hagerstown's parks. Perfect for beginners. Start 8 AM from the Northern Ave parking lot. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 for more details and to register.

Wednesday, April 9

MEETING. Anne Arundel. 7:30 PM at the Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville, MD. The subject is "Birds of The Gambia and Senegal," by *Gwen Brewer*, Science Program Manager, MD DNR-Wildlife and Heritage Service. For add'l info contact Barbara Johnson at 410-7034664 or barbarajohnson222@gmail.com.

Thursday, April 10

MEETING. Howard. "Birding and Beyond at Howard Hotspots," by *Bonnie Ott*. Explore the diversity of nature found in some of our county's natural areas. Hospitality 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Wes Earp, 410-531-3197.

MEETING. Talbot. A doctoral student will give a program on his research about the biology and life history of the Wood Thrush. 7 PM at Wm. Hill Auditorium, 501 Dutchman's Ln, Easton. For more info, contact Terry Allen at pattyallen10@hotmail.com or 410-829-5840.

Saturday, April 12

Harford. Swan Harbor Farm Park. This Harford Co gem with three impoundments, a commanding view of the Bay, wooded trails, and open fields has developed into a fine location for a broad spectrum of bird life, including waterfowl, marsh specialties, raptors, and sparrows. Meet at 7 AM for the interesting early morning activity. Park in the lot adjacent to the Agricultural Education Center (near end of driveway). Leader is Dave Webb (410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net).

Frederick and Montgomery. Hughes Hollow and Vicinity. Joint trip. Half day. We will explore the wetlands of Hughes Hollow, Sycamore Landing, and Riley's Lock. Meet at Hughes Hollow parking lot in the McKee-Beshers WMA at 7 AM. For more info, contact the co-leaders: Tom Humphrey (Frederick) at 301-696- 8540 (h), 240-793- 2508 (m), or humphrey96@comcast.net, or Jim Nelson (Montgomery) at 301-530-6574 or kingfishers2@verizon.net.

YMOS. Youth birding on the lower Eastern Shore (Nassawango Crk, Elliott's Island and Blackwater NWR). Early migrant search. Meet 7 AM (returning by 6 PM) at Sailwinds Park, Cambridge. Level: beginning to advanced. Contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com to reserve a spot.

Sunday, April 13

Anne Arundel. Patuxent-South Tract. The Patuxent Research Refuge is home to the National Wildlife Visitor Center. Located off of Powder Mill Rd, it's just a short drive from the Balt/Wash Pkwy. The South Tract offers five miles of trails along the two lakes surrounding the Visitor Center. We will stroll through the Visitor Center, if time allows. We'll meet at Parole P&R at 7 AM. Contact Kevin Smith (ravens3077@yahoo.com) for details. Leader: TBD.

Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for migrant and resident passerines. Meet 9 AM. Half mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Creek. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com and Bob Rineer, 410-252-6408 or brineer@verizon.net.

Cecil. Conowingo Wildflowers and Birds. Meet at Fisherman's Park below the dam at 7:30 AM for a half-day trip. Bring scope if you have one. Dress warmly if the weather is unseasonably cold. Easy walking on a level, well-graded trail (be prepared for some mud). Leader: Pat Valdata, pvaldata@zoominternet.net.

Frederick. Merkle Critical Area Driving Tour/Jug Bay. 3/4 day. Contact the leader: Kathy Calvert, 301-810-5677 for meet time and place.

Talbot. Anselot Farm in Worton, Kent County. Leader: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002. Meet time is 6:30 AM. Contact leader for meet location and add'l info.

Tuesday, April 15

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact leader: Ron Davis, 410-821-1297 or 2athigh1@verizon.net.

Wednesday, April 16

MEETING. Montgomery. "Singing and Dancing Through Ecuador and the Galapagos" by *Bill Young*. Bill is a birder and author from Arlington, VA. His presentation is based on his 2013 trip to these two areas. The program will include video footage, photographs, and audio recordings. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info contact Anna Urciolo at urcioloa@sidwell.edu.

Thursday, April 17

MEETING. Caroline. "The 2013/2014 Snowy Owl Invasion:

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A Much Closer Look” presented by *Bill Stewart*, Director of Partnerships and Marketing for the ABA and VP of the Delmarva Ornithological Society. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton. For info contact Debby Bennett at dabennett1996@gmail.com.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-459-3375 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, April 19

Anne Arundel. Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary. Established in 1985, Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary is one of the largest parks in AA Co and includes one of the largest freshwater tidal wetlands on the East Coast. The trails are dirt with gentle slopes. We'll meet at Parole P&R at 7 AM. Leader: David Gillum, dagmapper@verizon.net or 410-266-8775.

Baltimore. Huntley Meadows, VA. Bring picnic lunch for three-quarter day trip to northern VA woods and freshwater marsh with boardwalk trail for resident wildlife and early spring migrants. American Bittern and Sora both possible. Three-hour level walk on paved paths and boardwalks. Optional extension, after picnic lunch, for Prothonotary Warblers singing on territory in a MD location. Meet 7:30 AM at Nursery Rd P&R. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h), 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com.

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Wendy Alexander, 410-788-4080 or drbeabes@verizon.net.

Carroll. Liberty Watershed. Another great place for migrants. Meet 8 AM at parking area at east end of Bollinger Mill Rd. Leader: Dave Harvey, 410-795-3117. Moderate hike and could be muddy if recently rained. Expect kingfisher, herons, early migrants, woodpeckers, flycatchers, and warblers.

Kent. Beginner's Bird Walk at Eastern Neck NWR. Half day. In honor of Earth Day, we'll spend the morning exploring several of the trails and overlooks, looking for a variety of migrants, from raptors to warblers. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Tri-County. Nassawango Preserve. Migrating and resident vireos and warblers and other special birds of the swamp forest. Bring snacks and drink. Meet 7 AM in Ward Museum of

Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Leader: Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853.

Washington. Catocin Creek Nature Center. Meet at the Rte 66 P&R. Contact Shirley Ford at 301-241-3020 for start time and more details.

Sunday, April 20

Talbot. East of Route 50. In search of late wintering and/or early arriving north bound transient species in forested bottomlands and open habitats in close proximity to Easton. Leader: Jan Reese, 410-745-2875. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM.

Tuesday, April 22

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact leader: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652 or myconut@verizon.net.

MEETING. **Washington.** Program TBA. Call Anna at 301-797-8454 for info. 7 PM at the Mount Aetna Nature Center.

Friday, April 25

Harford. Jerusalem Mill. Visit this appealing stretch of the Little Gunpowder River marking Harford's western border. Meet at the Mill on Jerusalem Rd (not far west of Rte 152) at 7:30 AM. The leader is Phil Powers, birdsinmd@verizon.net or 410-679-4116.

Friday to Sunday, April 25 to 27

MOS. Carey Run Sanctuary Cleanup. The Carey Run Spring cleanup is schedule for April 25 to 27 (Fri PM to Sun AM). There will be a Bird walk on Sun morning. Please contact Mark Johnson at 443-528-0045 or Mark.steven.johnson@comcast.net for more info.

Saturday, April 26

Anne Arundel. Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, Washington, DC. Join us as we explore the ponds for flowers and the birds that frequent them. We also will explore the trail that leads back to the river. We'll meet at the Parole P&R at 7 AM. Contact Kevin Smith (ravens3077@yahoo.com) for details. Leader: TBD.

Baltimore. Soldiers Delight. Warblers, flycatchers, and tanagers are featured as spring migration heats up in this globally rare serpentine barrens ecosystem. Meet 7:30 AM at historical marker. Leader: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Baltimore. Patterson Park. Catch Spring migration at this green urban oasis in Balt. City. Meet 8 AM at the White House in park near intersection of Lombard St and Patterson Park

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Ave. For questions or to borrow binoculars for the walk, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center at ppaudubon@gmail.com or 410-558-2473.

Cecil. Woodlawn Wildlife Area. Join us for a leisurely stroll around the fields and woods of this re-awakening natural area. Meet 7 AM at the Woodlawn Parking Area for a ½ day nature walk. Contact leader, Richard Donham, rdonham8@gmail.com for all trip details.

NATIVE PLANT SALE. Frederick. Held by Audubon Society of Central MD, held at the Audrey Carroll Audubon Sanctuary. Please support this sale at one of our favorite and most productive birding hot spots. More info can be found at www.centralmdaudubon.org.

Frederick. C&O Canal Walk. Half day. We will go from Point of Rocks (with its newly spacious parking lot) to Lander for migrating warblers. Be sure to do your neck exercises beforehand. Contact leader: Pat Caro, 301-845-6246, for meet time and place.

Harford. Susquehanna SP. Birds and Flowers. An ideal time to enjoy emerging wildflowers, early migrant songbirds, and lingering winter visitors. Meet at the parking area at the confluence of Deer Creek and the Susquehanna River just north of Rock Run Mill at 8 AM. The leaders are Colleen Webster (410-459-4577 or cwebster@harford.edu) and Sue Procell (410-676-6602 or procellmd@gmail.com).

Howard. Mt. Pleasant Farm. 2-3 hrs. Meet 8 AM at parking lot near the barn. Easy walking through the fields of Mt. Pleasant farm. Tree lines, hedgerows, and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Great opportunity for flyovers. Facilities available. Leader: Mike Kerwin, 410-461-2408 or m63kerwin@verizon.net.

Montgomery. Blue Mash and Oaks Landfill. Half day. Waterproof boots helpful. Meet 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Call leader for reservations and directions. Limit: 10. Leader: Mark England, 240-207-3132 (h) or 240-375-4500 (m).

Talbot. Smith Island Excursion. Full day. We depart Somer's Cove Marina in Crisfield at 8 AM and travel across Tangier Sound and make stops on Smith Island at the villages of Ewell and Tylerton to bird and take in the sights. Always a nice mix of waterbirds, herons, egrets, Brown Pelicans, and a few migrant songbirds. Must make reservations with leaders: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840 or pattyallen10@hotmail.com and Jan Reese, 410-745-2875. Estimated cost \$75 (includes crab cake lunch).

Washington. Pangborn Park. Continuing series of walks to promote bird watching in Hagerstown's parks. Perfect for beginners. Meet 8 at the lake pavilion. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 for more details and to register.

Sunday, April 27

Baltimore. Chimney Swifts at Dusk. Join the BBC Swift

Watch Team as Chimney Swifts enter a favorite chimney at sunset. Meet time 7:45 PM. Due to the fact that the swifts routinely change migration roosting chimneys, this year's spring site will be posted on the BBC website (<http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/382565775136349/members/) on Fri, Apr 25. Come a half hour early if the weather is cloudy or gray. Cancelled if raining. Leader: Joan Cwi, 410-467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net.

Kent. Turner's Creek and Sassafras NRMA. Explore a diversity of habitats from wood margins and small ponds to open fields, looking for spring migrants. Half day, bring snacks. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

Montgomery. Hugh Mahanes Presidents' Walk at Hughes Hollow. Half day. Participation of all former Club Presidents is encouraged, and everyone is welcome. Meet 7 AM at the Hughes Hollow parking lot. Reservations required. For more info contact leader: Anna Urciolo at urcioloa@sidwell.edu.

Patuxent. Points along Patuxent River for migrant waders and songbirds. Meet 7 AM at the Bowie P&R to carpool. Find directions to Bowie P&R lot at: <http://www.pgaudubon.org/BowiePandR.html>. Contact Dave Mozurkewich at 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Talbot. Hope House Farm. This property provides a mixed habitat of forest, forest edge, fields, and tidal waterfront. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM. Breakfast Hosts: Peter Stifel.

Washington. City Park. Continuing series of walks to promote bird watching in Hagerstown's parks. Start 8 AM from the Hager House parking lot. Call Sandy Sagalkin at 240-291-6465 for more details and to register.

YMOS. Western Shore Migrant Search. Preparation for the WSB. Meet 5:45 AM (returning by 6:30 PM) at Elkton McDonalds (Rte's 40/213). Level: beginning to advanced. Contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com to reserve a spot.

Monday, April 28

MEETING. Tri-County. Program: "Madagascar," by Clyde Morris and Joelle Buffa. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury. For more info contact Betty Pitney at 410-543-1853.

Tuesday, April 29

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot.

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Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net.

Wednesday, April 30

Washington. Western MD Rail Trail. Bike and bird along western MD's lovely rail trail. Meet at the trail parking area in Hancock. Call Sandy Sagalkin at 240-291-6465 for start time and directions.

Thursday, May 1

MEETING. Frederick. The famous annual FBC Bird Quiz! Your bird identification skills will be challenged by a series of pictures and sounds. Bob Schaefer will challenge you with videos. 7 PM at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info, contact Tom Humphrey, Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org or 301-696-8540.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-459-3375 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, May 3

Allegany/Garrett. Green Ridge SF for warblers! Meet at the P&R off Ali Ghan and Christie Rds at 8 AM. Contact Mary Huebner at marybrd22@gmail.com for add'l details.

Baltimore. Susquehanna SP, Rock Run Area. Meet at Cromwell Bridge Rd P&R at 6:30 AM. Or meet at the park at 7:30 AM at the lot next to the old mill building. Possible Cerulean and Prothonotary Warblers and a collection of spring migrants. Bring a picnic lunch for the wrap-up. Must register with the leader. Limit 15. Leader: Tim Houghton, 410-510-7504 or thoughton@loyola.edu.

Carroll. Susquehanna SP. Spring migration along the Susquehanna River. All nesting warblers will also be present. Meet 8 AM at the parking lot on Stafford Rd immediately west of Lapidum Rd. From I-95 north, exit at Rte 155 east and in a quarter mile turn left on Lapidum Rd. Follow it to its end at Stafford Rd and turn left. Leader: Bob Ringler, 410-303-2792.
MAY COUNT. Dorchester. 93rd May Count. 1st of two Dorchester May counts. Compiler: Harry Armistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com

Frederick. Thompson WMA (near Front Royal, VA). Warblers and wildflowers! Contact the leader: Lois Kauffman, 301-845-6690 for meet time and place.

Harford. Sixth Annual Epic Birding Contest. The previous 5 competitions have been well-attended and good fun. So make room on your calendar to join us at Susquehanna SP. Birders at all skill levels welcome. Meet at the Rock Run Mill at 6:30 AM for team selections and rules review. Counting will begin at 6:45 AM and end at 11:30 AM. Rally celebration will occur

at approximately 12 noon at the Laurrapin Restaurant in Havre de Grace. Family members and others are welcome to join the contestants for the celebration. Coordinators are Tom Gibson (410-734-4135 or gibsonlld@aol.com) and Sue Procell (410-676-6602 or procellmd@gmail.com).

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Washington. Mills Park. Continuing series of walks to promote bird watching in Hagerstown's parks. Perfect for beginners. Start 8 AM from the Northern Ave parking lot. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 for more details and to register.

Sunday, May 4

Anne Arundel. Family Bird Walk, Kinder Farm Park. See Mar 2 description. Leader: Stacy Epperson, 410-987-7533 or stac.epperson@gmail.com.

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

FRED ARCHIBALD MAY COUNT. Frederick. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6 AM. Coordinator: Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Montgomery. Occoquan Bay NWR. Half day. Explore the diverse habitats in this one-square mile refuge at the confluence of the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers in Woodbridge, VA. A variety of raptors and migratory warblers, vireos, thrushes, and flycatchers should be present, and rails and bitterns are possibilities. Meet at the parking lot in the center of the refuge at 7:30 AM. Reservations required. Limit: 25. For reservations, call the leaders: Mike Bowen at 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com, and Gerry Hawkins, 571-277-8406 or maineusa@comcast.net.

Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Near peak migration for warblers and vireos, including those breeding in this varied habitat. Contact the leader for time and directions. Reservations required. Leader: Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894.

Talbot. Bombay Hook NWR and DE Bay Shore. This trip is at the height of spring migration for wading birds, shorebirds, and passerines. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 6:30 AM. Bring lunch, drinks, and snacks to share. Full day trip.

Mainstreaming the Conservation of Bird Populations and their Habitats: Report on October Jug Bay Conference

By Colin Rees, Anne Arundel Bird Club

One the most important functions of the MOS Chapters is to help engage its members and the wider community in the conservation of bird populations and their habitats. This was very much a topic of discussion at the Workshop on Mainstreaming the Conservation of Bird Populations and their Habitats in Maryland held last October at Jug Bay. A grouping of partners, including some MOS Chapters, DNR, Chesapeake Bay Fund and several bird conservation organizations (MD and national) concluded that conservation had to be better mainstreamed across the board and encouraged the following actions:

- * Making the MOS and its chapters more relevant to bird habitat conservation, persuading birders to appreciate the urgency of conservation;
- * Encouraging bird watching with a purpose, e.g., joining groups supporting studies/stewardship, supporting IBAs, etc.;
- * Supporting practical steps in favor of conservation, e.g., promoting guidelines for habitat management and using findings in favor of bird conservation to influence state government and decision-making bodies;
- * Partnering to mainstream conservation, e.g. working more effectively with the farming community, DNR, bird conservation groups;
- * Consolidating data gleaned from bird surveys, banding data, etc., and ensuring science-based information feeds into education, policy and public/private land issues;
- * Providing input into the MD Wildlife Plan (to be revised by mid 2015); support the wildlands initiatives of concern to bird populations and other wildlife;
- * Supporting bird conservation organizations.

This is a demanding agenda but one we must surely adopt if we are to protect the natural environment for our children and grandchildren.

POSTMASTER: TIME-DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE EXPEDITE!

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*Anyone is welcome to contribute articles, photos,
or ideas that would be of interest to other birders.
Copy may be e-mailed to Richard Donham by
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